



Best Practice: Utilize third party perspectives to reinforce and localize the economic hardship resulting from rising gas prices

Member: Rep. Patrick McHenry (NC-10)

How it works:

- ❖ Member holds a press conference on the energy crisis where he or she is joined by representatives from local businesses who share their struggles in coping with the increasing cost of fuel.
- ❖ Identify local businesses that have transportation and freight needs and invite representatives to your press conference.
- ❖ After the Member provides a brief overview on the causes of the energy crisis, local business representatives speak to the impact of rising gas prices on their bottom line and that of their employees.
- ❖ The Member then concludes the press conference with a thorough discussion of solutions for lower gas prices and American energy independence.

The Benefits:

- ❖ Stories like this: *'Oil prices are everyone's problem'*, Hickory Daily Record, July 8, 2008, http://www.hickoryrecord.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=HDR/MGArticle/HDR_BasicArticle&c=MGArticle&cid=1173355842896
- ❖ In the eyes of reporters and the public, third parties lend credibility to the messenger and the message.

Member Office Contact: Brock McCleary, (202) 225-2576



Best Practice: Constituent Communication / Energy Focus Magazine

Member: Rep. Devin Nunes (CA-21)

How it works:

- ❖ Produce a full-color, high-quality publication with lots of images and graphs to attract attention. This document has shelf life and will survive the glance-and-toss outcome associated with most newsletters.
- ❖ Entirely produced in-house, with the exception of printing, saving money.
- ❖ Send to newsletter subscribers or mass mail to a larger group.

The Benefits:

- ❖ Exposes myths about U.S. energy policy.
- ❖ Lays out our current situation in a meaningful way to average Americans.
- ❖ Provides a forward-thinking plan with the benefit of immediate help to consumers.
- ❖ Exposes Democrats and environmental radicals for failed energy policies.
- ❖ Provides your constituents with a meaningful energy plan and hard-hitting facts that are not available in the mainstream media.

Member Office Contact: Andrew House, (202) 225-2523



Best Practice: Small Business Roundtable – Energy Prices

Member: Rep. Tom Price (GA-06)

How it works:

- ❖ The District Director works with local Chambers of Commerce to secure 6-12 small business owners in a wide range of industries that are affected by high gas prices. Event can be held at a local Chamber of Commerce, district office, or local business.
- ❖ The Press Secretary arranges for local media to cover the discussion and creates visual aids and charts on the effect of gas prices on the economy.
- ❖ The Member opens the discussion with brief remarks and then allows the business owners to share their personal struggles caused by higher costs. Following personal testimonies, the Member discusses solutions and challenges with participants. Media are then allowed to ask questions of the Member and participants.
- ❖ Follow-up options: send out press release, give 1-minute or 5-minute speeches on what was learned, post a recording of the event online, and talk about the event on local radio or TV.

The Benefits:

- ❖ Shows our national issue in a personal light.
- ❖ Allows small local papers to cover a national debate.
- ❖ Provides personal anecdotes for debate, discussion, and constituent letters in Washington.

Member Office Contact: Brendan Buck, (202) 225-4501



Best Practice: Energy Solutions Website

Member: Denny Rehberg (MT-AL)

How it works:

Create a stand-alone website linked from your official page in which you discuss energy policy and provide useful third-party resources for constituents. For example, see

<http://www.house.gov/rehberg/energyindependence/>

- ❖ Include resources for gas prices, fuel conservation, explanations for why energy prices are high, etc. There are many such pages available in both .gov domains and private sources.
- ❖ Discuss your “all of the above” energy solutions as a plan. Provide links and resources where relevant.
- ❖ Include and link to energy policy legislation that you have sponsored or cosponsored. The Discharge Petition list is particularly helpful:
<http://www.gop.gov/energy/multimedia/calendar.html>
- ❖ If you have an e-newsletter, solicit comments via survey or contact form and provide some of those comments in a “here’s what people from my district are saying” section of the website.
- ❖ Reference your website as a clearinghouse of information – direct constituents there using e-newsletters, press releases, speeches, mailings, etc. Make it your energy message headquarters.

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The Benefits:

- ❖ Gives Member and staff a concrete location to direct people who are worried that you aren't doing anything.
- ❖ Getting a lot of phone calls about gas prices? Now you have somewhere to direct them.
- ❖ Stand-alone nature of website shows constituents that the issue is a priority and establishes a niche of leadership. You are setting the grounds for the discussion.
- ❖ Drives up visits to your website.

Member Office Contact: Jed Link, (202) 225-3211



Best Practice: Using Animation and New Media to Promote Legislation

Member: Rep. Mike Rogers (MI-08)

How it works:

- ❖ An animated short story can supplement a policy initiative and generate more attention.
- ❖ View the story Mike created for his Energy Independence plan at: www.mikerogers.house.gov/EnergyIndependence/index.html

Preparation:

At least three weeks before you want to roll out your plan:

- ❖ Purchase/acquire a robust list of email addresses.
- ❖ Hire a vendor to produce an interactive animated movie about a new policy proposal for use on the Internet. The company you choose should have past experience producing animation (we used Adfero) and be able to work with staff to combine the concept of the plan and the image of the Member to bring alive an entertaining and informative story.
- ❖ Create a dedicated page on your website for the effort and use the animated movie as the centerpiece.

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Execution:

- ❖ On the day you are breaking the story, release the movie as the feature in an email update and as part of an interactive press release. Also, set up media sessions at schools where you show the animated movie to students and answer their questions about the issue. Finally, show the movie to editorial boards in your district as a way to explain your issue and demonstrate your efforts to gain grassroots support.

The Benefits:

- ❖ Explains detailed policy in an easy-to-understand manner.
- ❖ Adds additional media opportunities.

Follow Up:

- ❖ You can also use press coverage generated by your roll out for additional email updates.

Value compared to a mailer:

- ❖ A mailer to 100,000 constituents cost at least \$45,000 for printing and postage. An interactive email to 100,000 constituents costs \$15,000 for the animated movie and \$3,000 for the website development. **A savings of \$27,000.**
- ❖ The email can also be sent during blackouts to your email update list.

Member Office Contact: Mike Ward, (202) 225-4872



Best Practice: Energy listening session and video

Member: Rep. Paul Ryan (WI-01)

How it works:

- ❖ Schedule listening sessions/town hall meetings, with a focus on the most pressing concerns of those in your district.
- ❖ Include a number of PowerPoint slides that illustrate the need to boost American supply of energy.
 - With ANWR, contrast the pristine images that the Sierra Club has put forth with the actual view of the northern corner of Alaska where the oil is.
 - Also include maps to show where Congress has made it illegal to drill, along with additional steps needed to enact a coherent, comprehensive energy plan.
- ❖ Use the GOP Conference recording studio to make a video of your energy plan. You can find ours at: www.house.gov/ryan/energy

The Benefits:

- ❖ Provides telling visuals on the drilling debate. Watch the positive reaction here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=mgv5LwHRgx4
- ❖ Recording a video can personalize the message and include helpful illustrations of this issue. The video can be distributed widely.

Member Office Contact: Conor Sweeney, (202) 226-7326



Best Practice: Radio interview on energy issues

Member: Rep Lee Terry (NE-02)

How it works:

- ❖ Make a pitch to local radio stations that your boss is available anytime to talk about energy issues.
- ❖ Offer to let your boss take live calls from listeners.
- ❖ Make sure the radio station knows your boss has a plan to lower gas prices and make our country energy independent.
- ❖ Ask if the Member can be on for at least 30 minutes during the morning and/or evening drive-time radio.

The Benefits:

- ❖ The Member of Congress gets good publicity demonstrating that he or she understands the problem and has a solution to our nation's energy crisis.
- ❖ It shows the Member is willing to openly talk about the issues and connect with constituents by taking phone calls.

Member Office Contact: Lisa Ellis, (402) 397-9944



Best Practice: Meet with state and local Social Security officials about how the price of gas is affecting senior citizens.

Member: Rep. Lee Terry (NE-02)

How it works:

- ❖ Opportunity to meet face-to-face with state and local officials.
- ❖ Lets local and state officials know you and your office are accessible.
- ❖ Allows the Representative to work on a local and state level to come up with a plan to help senior citizens hit hard by gas prices.

The Benefits:

- ❖ State and local officials know you are aware of the problem and understand that some of the hardest hit people are those on limited incomes, like seniors. You are taking a proactive approach. They learn Congressman Terry has a solution to the problem.
- ❖ Opens the door to write articles, go to meetings, and make speeches for AARP in the future.
- ❖ The Representative becomes a resource for local and state AARP officials.

Member Office Contact: Lisa Ellis, (402) 397-9944



Best Practice: Presentation on tying our hands on domestic energy production

Member: Rep. Mac Thornberry (TX-13)

How it works:

- ❖ The Member uses a map or PowerPoint slide to graphically illustrate all the oil, natural gas and coal areas of the United States that are currently off-limits or restricted from production.
- ❖ The script walks the audience through the map by region making it clear how much of the United States is off-limits to oil, gas and coal production, as well as how action or inaction by Congressional Democrats is tying our hands on domestic energy production.
- ❖ A well footnoted handout gives press and constituents objective facts by which to judge the situation for themselves.

The Benefits:

- ❖ A picture is worth 1000 words: Colorful graphics hold the viewer's attention and make clear the vast areas of the United States that are off-limits or restricted from energy production.
- ❖ Provides a graphic that can be shared with the media to keep the debate focused on untying our hands and allowing more domestic energy production.

Member Office Contact: George Rasley, (202) 225-3706



Best Practice: Gas Station Event with Survey

Member: Rep. Todd Tiahrt (KS-04)

How it works:

- ❖ Member pumps gas for constituents while sharing energy solutions with them.
- ❖ In addition, while the Member is pumping gas, have the constituents fill out a survey on their thoughts and solutions to bring down energy prices.
- ❖ Toward the end, the Member will hold a press conference at the gas station talking about his or her energy solutions.
- ❖ We also directed people to our “Energy Freedom” website where more people could read about energy and take the survey.

The Benefits:

- ❖ Great way to get constituents actively involved in the process—and gives them an opportunity to voice their opinion.
- ❖ Great press exposure! We had all our radio, TV, newspaper media in our district show up. Resulted in lots of positive press.
- ❖ This is the issue everyone is talking about—OWN IT!

Member Office Contact: Wendy Cook, (202) 225-6216



Best Practice: Taking advantage of existing constituent communications to reinforce energy principles

Member: Rep. Fred Upton, (MI-06)

Background: Upton closes every constituent letter with the following:

Thank you again for contacting me. As the top Republican on the Energy and Air Quality Subcommittee, I have focused on modernizing our nation's energy policy to address such diverse challenges as skyrocketing fuel costs and global climate change. Our energy needs are anticipated to grow by nearly 40 percent over the next two decades. As a consequence, the United States must begin to responsibly utilize its domestic energy reserves, the production of which is decades overdue.

How can we ask Arab nations to increase their production while our coasts and interior remain off-limits to environmentally sound exploration? It is inexplicable to me that the Chinese have been given license to drill off the Cuban coast, and yet, we cannot do the same off of Florida – in essence, in the same oil field! At the same time, it is also essential for us to continue to advance renewable energy sources like wind, solar, and emissions-free nuclear power as well as conserve energy through new technologies.

As always, I appreciate hearing from you and look forward to your input as Congress continues to work towards solutions to the many issues facing our country.

How it works:

- ❖ Close every constituent correspondence with standard language highlighting Member/Conference energy principles.
- ❖ Staff crafts energy principles that best resonate in the home district.

The Benefits:

- ❖ Simple, effective means of spreading the Member's energy positions to constituents.
- ❖ An easy practice to take advantage of already existing operations.
- ❖ Keeps the Member's energy priorities in the forefront.
- ❖ Reinforces Member's energy principles to the thousands of constituents already in contact with your office.

Member Office Contact: Sean Bonyun, (202) 225-3761